

## Message Text

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S E C R E T BERN 5780

NODIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS HYLAND, WHITE HOUSE

EO 11652: GSS  
TAGS: PINS  
SUBJ: CORVALAN-BUKOVSKY EXCHANGE

REF: BERN 5753 (NODIS)

SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE IS A DESCRIPTION OF THE  
CORVALAN-BUKOVSKY AIRPORT EXCHANGE. IT MAY PROVIDE  
SOME ATMOSPHERICS; AND A FEW COMMENTS CONCLUDE THE MESSAGE.  
END SUMMARY.

1. DURING THE DISCUSSIONS WHICH LED UP TO THE EXCHANGE,  
THE PRINCIPAL SOVIET OBJECTIVES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN TO AVOID  
PUBLICITY AND TO HAVE THE EXCHANGE REPRESENTED AS A  
BILATERAL SOVIET-U S ARRANGEMENT. THE CHILEAN OBJECTIVE WAS  
TO INSURE PUBLICITY AND REPRESENT THE EXCHANGE AS THEIR OWN  
INITIATIVE. THE INITIAL SWISS DESIRE WAS TO AVOID EXTENSIVE  
PUBLICITY, BUT THE SWISS QUICKLY BOWED TO THE INEVITABLE.

2. THE SOVIETS MADE IT CLEAR THAT THEY WOULD NOT ACQUIESCE  
IN ANY CHILEAN PRESENCE NEAR THE SOVIET AIRCRAFT.  
CHILEAN AMBASSADOR SILVA INITIALLY AGREED TO GREET  
CORVALAN AT THE LUFTHANSA PLANE AND PROCEED TO THE  
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PRIVATE ROOM IN THE AIPORT. ON THE MORNING OF THE  
EXCHANGE, HOWEVER, SILVA MADE REPEATED AND DETERMINED  
EFFORTS TO TURN THIS ARRANGEMENT AROUND. WE COMPROMISED  
TO AN ARRANGEMENT THAT HAD SILVA GREET  
BUKOVSKY ON THE TARMAC, IN FRONT OF THE  
ENTRANCE TO THE PRIVATE ROOM. THIS APPEARS TO HAVE

MET HIS MINIMAL NEEDS FOR OPEN-AIR MOTION PICTURE COVERAGE OF HIS CONVERSATION WITH BUKOVSKY. HE HAD IMPORTED A CHILEAN CAMERA MAN, A RUSSIAN SPEAKING CHILEAN DIPLOMAT FROM THE U S., AND A SUBORDINATE FROM HIS OWN MISSION FOR THE OCCASION.

3. THE SWISS ALLOWED THE PRESS TO TAKE PICTURES FROM THE ROOF OF THE AIR TERMINAL, WHERE THEY HAD A DISTANT VIEW OF THE LUFTHANSA ARRIVAL BUT CONSIDERABLY LESS ABILITY TO VIEW THE PROCEEDINGS AT THE AEROFLOT PLANE. (I WAS IDENTIFIED WITH A LARGE ARROW IN A SWISS NEWSPAPER AS SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CHILEAN COMMUNIST PARTY.)

4. THE EXCHANGE BEGAN WHEN CORVALAN AND HIS WIFE, ACCOMPANIED BY A CHILEAN SECURITY AGENT, EMERGED FROM THE LUFTHANSA PLANE. CORVALAN WAS PINK CHEEKED AND LOOKED, I THOUGHT, IN REASONABLY GOOD PHYSICAL CONDITION - ALTHOUGH I CANNOT KNOW WHAT PRIVATIONS AND DAMAGE TO HIS HEALTH MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE TRUE INNER REALITY. AMBASSADOR SILVE GREETED CORVALAN BRIEFLY, DOING LITTLE MORE THAN WISHING HIM LUCK. THE CORVALANS AND I THEN DROVE TO THE SOVIET AIRCRAFT. CORVALAN SPENT THAT TIME DESCRIBING HIS EXPERIENCES IN DETENTION AND THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT'S BOORISHNESS IN GIVING HIM BUT A FEW SECONDS TO BID FARWELL TO HIS CLOSE RELATIVES. HE ACKNOWLEDGED U S EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE, INCLUDING AN AMERICAN ROLE IN HIS RELEASE. WHEN I DESCRIBED THE ARRANGEMENTS THE SOVIETS HAD MADE, HE COMMENTED WITH A WRY SMILE: "SO THEY ARE GOING TO PUT ME INSTANTLY  
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ON A PLANE FOR MOSCOW, EH." HE DID NOT INDICATE ANY RELUCTANCE TO GO THROUGH WITH THE ARRANGEMENT NOR DID HE MAKE ANY REQUEST THAT IT BE CHANGED. HE AND HIS WIFE WERE CORDIAL.

5. AT THE SOVIET AIRCRAFT I INTRODUCED THE CORVALANS TO AMBASSADOR GUERASSIMOV AND OTHER SOVIET OFFICIALS WHO WERE THERE. BUKOVSKY TOLD ME LATER THAT "BARANOV", WHO HE CLAIMED WAS ANDROPOV'S DEPUTY, WAS AMONG THEM. THE INEVITABLE BOUQUETS OF FLOWERS WERE PRESENTED, AND LITTLE SPEECHES WERE MADE. THE SOVIETS HAD INSISTED THAT BUKOVSKY AND HIS FAMILY BE CONCEALED BEHIND A LARGE OIL TRUCK, SO THEY COULD NOT VIEW THE PROCEEDINGS. (THEY HAD GOOD REASON, FOR DOING SO, FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW, AS BUKTVSKY LATER TOLD ME HE HAD BEEN MOST ANXIOUS TO GREET AND TALK WITH CORVALAN.)

6. BUKOVSKY'S SISTER AND SICK NEPHEW PROCEEDED IN AN

AMBULANCE TO THE ZURICH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL. WE HAD PROVIDED AN INTERPRETER - THE MOTHER-IN-LAW OF A FORMER ZURICH CONSULATE STAFFER - AND I BELIEVE THIS OPERATION WENT WITHOUT HITCH. APPARENTLY THE BOY'S CONDITION IS NOT IN ANY CRISIS PHASE, AND THE DOCTORS' PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ARE THAT HE COULD BE TRANSPORTED FOR SYSTEMATIC TREATMENT TO WHATEVER PLACE THE BUKOVSKYS MIGHT SELECT.

7. BUKOVSKY LOOKED A BIT TRANSLUCENT AROUND THE EYES, AND TOLD ME HE HAD BEEN IN HANDCUFFS, EVEN ON THE AIRCRAFT, UNTIL THE SOVIET BORDER HAD BEEN CROSSED. HE IS INTELLIGENT, ATTRACTIVE, AND RESPONSIVE.

8. IN THE CAR I EXPLAINED AMBASSADOR SILVA'S PLAN TO DELIVER A MESSAGE FROM GENERAL PINOCHET, INVITE BUKOVSKY TO CHILE, AND ASK BUKOVSKY FOR ANY MESSAGE HE HAD FOR THE CHILEAN PEOPLE. I EXPLAINED THAT SILVA WOULD HAVE  
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A TAPE RECORDER AND TAKE MOVIES. I ASKED BUKOVSKY IF HE KNEW WHO THE HEAD OF THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT WAS. BUKOVSKY INDICATED THAT HE KNEW PINOCHET'S NAME AND WAS ACQUAINTED WITH THE PRESENT CHILEAN GOVERNMENT'S REPUTATION (WHICH HE DID NOT ADMIRE). I EXPLAINED THAT BUKOVSKY AND HIS FAMILY COULD TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES AT ANY TIME, AND PASSED ON NEWS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LEYDEN'S OFFER OF A POSITION. BUKOVSKY INDICATED HE HAD NO INTENTION OF GOING TO CHILE, AND ASKED MY ADVICE ON HANDLING THE CHILDEAN AMB. I NOTED THAT THE CHILEAN GOVT HAD TAKEN SIGNIFICANT ACTION IN RELEASING CORVALAN IN EXCHANGE FOR HIMSELF, AND ADVISED BUKOVSKY TO GIVE A COURTEOUS REPLY TO SILVA'S REPRESENTATIONS. (THIS HE DID - TO SILVA.) THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN BUKOVSKY, HIS MOTHER, AND ME WAS PRIVATE. (THE ONLY OTHER PERSON IN THE CAR, MY CHAUFFEUR, UNDERSTANDS NO RUSSIAN.)

9. AFTER THE EXCHANGE ON THE AIR STRIP BETWEEN AMB SILVA AND BUKOVSKY, I CONDUCTED THE BUKOVSKYS INTO THE PRIVATE ROOM WHILE THE CHILEANS WENT OFF TO ANOTHER PRIVATE ROOM TO TELEPHONE SANTIAGO.

10. THE BRITISH ACTOR, DAVID MARKHAM, SENT IN HIS CARD AND WAS PROMPTLY ADMITTED WITH A YOUNG RUSSIAN-SPEAKING LADY ACCOMPANYING HIM. APPARENTLY, DAVID MARKHAM HAD SPONSORED AND VOUCHERED FOR BUKOVSKY WITH THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES, AND WAS IN SOME SORT OF FOSTER-FATHER OR FOSTER-UNCLE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM. THE BUKOVSKYS WERE OVERJOYED TO SEE HIM. MARKHAM PRESSED BUKOVSKY HARD

TO CLIMB ON A PLANE IMMEDIATELY FOR ENGLAND,  
BUT BUKOVSKY'S MOTHER - STRONG WOMAN - MADE SURE  
BUKOVSKY WAS NOT CROWDED TO A PREMATURE DECISION.  
BUKOVSKY WAS FULL OF QUESTIONS TO MARKHAM AND TO  
ME ABOUT HIS MANY WARM FRIENDS IN THE FOREIGN PRESS CORPS IN  
MOSCOW WHOM HE HAD KNOWN PRIOR TO HIS DETENTION.

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BUKOVSKY AGREED TO ALLOW THE PRESS TO TAKE PICTURES ON  
CONDITION THEY NOT ASK QUESTIONS UNTIL HE HAD A NIGHT'S  
SLEEP. THIS ARRANGEMENT BROKE DOWN INSTANTLY, OF COURSE.  
NEVERTHELESS, BUKOVSKY WAS ABLE TO CONFINE HIMSELF TO A  
BRIEF SERIES OF COMMENTS, PUNCTUATED BY HIS REITERATED  
PROMISE TO HOLD A FULL-SCALE PRESS CONFERENCE ON SUNDAY.

11. THE SWISS CONSULTED AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL IN MAKING  
ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE BUKOVSKY' LODGING. I HOPE AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL, HAVING MADE THE ARRANGEMENTS, WILL BE  
PREPARED TO PICK UP THE TAB.

12. COMMENT: WHO ACHIEVED HIS PURPOSES? THE SOVIETS  
SUCCEEDED IN AVOIDING PUBLICITY, EXCEPT AT LONG DISTANCE,  
DURING THE EXCHANGE ITSELF. BEYOND THAT, THEY HAVE HAD  
PRECIOUS LITTLE SUCCESS IN AVOIDING UNFLATTERING NEWS  
AND COMMENTARY ON LACK OF FREEDOM IN THEIR COUNTRY,  
THEIR FAILURE TO CHANGE THEIR WAYS IN RESPONSE TO THEIR  
HELSINKI UNDERTAKINGS, ETC. WHILE SUCCESSFUL IN ENSURING  
THAT EVENTS AROUND THEIR OWN AIRCRAFT WERE  
BILATERAL BETWEEN THEMSELVES AND THE US,  
THEY DID NOT CONVEY ANY SUCH IMPRESSION TO THE WORLD.

THE CHILEANS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY THROWN THE SPOT-  
LIGHT ON SOVIET HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. THEY FAILED  
HOWEVER TO ESTABLISH A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SOVIETS  
AND THEMSELVES. IN FACT, CORVALAN IS BEING PORTRAYED  
AS BEING AS INNOCENT AS BUKOVSKY - OR BERLINGUER  
(ONE FORGETS THAT THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN COMMUNISTS HAVE  
NOT YET TASTED POWER). BUKOVSKY'S SOMEWHAT UNBECOMING  
CRACK AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ABOUT AN EXCHANGE OF  
BREZHNEV FOR PINOCHET CAUGHT THE MOOD OF THE WORLD'S  
REACTION - AT LEAST AS SEEN FROM THIS SWISS CITY.

I BELIEVE THE WORLD IS BETTER OFF FOR THE SOVIET  
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY TRY TO CONCEAL

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IT - THAT POLITICAL PRISONERS IN BOTH THE SOVIET UNION  
AND CHILE FOUND RELEASE. THIS HAS LENT A CERTAIN  
LEGITIMACY TO DISSIDENCE. I AM SURE THE SOVIETS FELT  
A NEED TO DEMONSTRATE TO THEIR BRETHREN AROUND THE WORLD  
THAT THEY WILL PAY A HIGH PRICE TO LIBERATE COMMUNIST  
CHIEFS FROM "FASCIST" JAILS. BUT FOR THIS, I DOUBT IT  
THE SOVIETS COULD HAVE BROUGHT THEMSELVES TO AGREE TO  
THE EXCHANGE. THE EXCHANGE.  
DAVIS

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